



U.S. Department of Justice

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For Immediate Release:

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EVENT: Guilty Verdict

Defendant: Lawrence Nelson

DETROIT MAN CONVICTED OF ESCAPE

A 62-year-old Detroit man was found guilty late yesterday by a federal jury in Detroit on a charge of escape from the Milan Federal Detention Center, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Robert M. Grubbs, United States Marshal for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Found guilty was Lawrence Nelson. The jury deliberated for less than ten minutes before returning the verdict, concluding a three-day trial before United States District Judge Denise Page Hood.

The evidence presented at trial showed that on August 6, 2005, Nelson – who was in custody at Milan following the revocation of parole which stemmed from a 20-year drug conviction – had been granted a 12-hour furlough to attend a memorial service for his wife. He was to report back to Milan at 8:00 p.m. that evening but failed to do so. Nelson was tracked down and apprehended 38 days after his escape by a team of deputy federal marshals.

The defendant testified at trial that he did not attend his wife's memorial service. Instead, he took up residence with a girlfriend.

"It goes without saying that all those committed to federal custody must serve the entire time allotted to them. As this case amply demonstrates, any criminal who seeks to escape from prison and undermine the safety of our community will face intensive pursuit, capture, unrelentingly aggressive prosecution, and upon conviction, far more time in prison than they originally were given," United States Attorney Murphy said.

"Marshal Grubbs said, "This case demonstrates the tenacity with which our deputies work on a daily basis involving fugitive investigations."

Murphy commended the work of the Deputy Marshal's that were involved in this case and personnel from the Milan Federal Detention Center.

A sentencing date has been set for October 19, 2006. Nelson faces a maximum sentence of 5 years imprisonment. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Leonid Feller.